



Strategic Priorities Information Paper

Line of Effort 3, Goal 2:

Increase Innovation Opportunities

Goal leader: Marc Vandever, AFIMSC Chief Innovation Officer

Goal Description: Our goal is to empower Airmen across the organization to find better ways of accomplishing their mission. The innovation ecosystem is diverse and dynamic. We need to create a culture, provide the tools and training, and make it easier for anyone in our workforce to navigate that ecosystem successfully. There are amazing amounts of resources and funding our enterprise can tap into today and it will continue to grow.

What are your objectives?

Our objectives are to grow opportunities – both in ideas submitted, awarded through Small Business Innovation Research or the Secretary of the Air Force Acquisition's "Big Bets" in their STRATIFI program – and collaborate across bases and their squadron innovation funds. The more we educate and train the enterprise on these fantastic opportunities, the more we empower Airmen to be successful!

We're also looking at establishing an innovation collaboration space in downtown San Antonio in cooperation with Geekdom. They have three floors in the middle of downtown and access to startup companies, senior mentors and meeting rooms. COVID-19 has slowed acquiring this space, but we hope to have it up and running in 2021.

Why is Increasing Innovation Opportunities important to AFIMSC?

The Air Force was built on innovation, but it also has much institutionalized bureaucracy. Our goal, and our innovation office, plays an important role in breaking down those roadblocks and helping our Airmen realize their great ideas. There is an entire ecosystem and coalition of the motivated that are driven by forward progress; harnessing that energy is important to AFIMSC.

How does your goal support AFMC, Air Force and National Defense Priorities?

Our people drive our innovation efforts across the enterprise. Their ideas are helping develop mobile apps our Airmen strongly desire and developing drones with advanced sensors and machine learning to deliver requirements better, faster and cheaper. We currently have efforts ongoing in every part of our enterprise from environmental, infrastructure, force protection, contracting and acquisition, robotics process automation, childcare even a digital landscaping effort directly supporting AFIMSC Strategy.

How are you measuring success?

Our STRATIFI project with Aerial Applications is a great example to measure success. Currently, we use expensive multi-million dollar contracts to assess habitat for endangered species. Our 4-year effort will replace those contracts with drones that can do it for tens of thousands, and do it quicker and with greater accuracy.

L3, G2: Increase Innovation Opportunities

We have multiple efforts going on in Small Business Innovation Research and we've been able to add outside funding to our \$3 million internal budget. To date, we have secured \$63 million in matching funds from other government sources or venture capital.

Is there anything you would like to add?

On Sept. 1-2, the AFIMSC Innovation Office hosted a worldwide [Innovation Summit](#) with all major Air Force Installations as we continue to evolve the innovation ecosystem. With a theme of Evolution of Innovation, the virtual event brought more than 100 installation and mission support leaders and innovators together for a series of special engagements designed to help them empower Airmen and learn about opportunities available to pursue and cultivate innovative ideas.



Your Success is Our Mission